

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method, comprising:
2 requesting a password from a basic input-output system (BIOS), after
3 loading an operating system kernel;
4 receiving the password; and
5 unlocking a hard drive with the password.

- 1 2. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
2 executing an initialization component in the operating system kernel; and
3 loading a plurality of drivers.

- 1 3. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
2 determining whether the hard drive is locked;
3 wherein requesting the password from the basic input-output system
4 (BIOS) is performed after determining the hard drive is locked.

- 1 4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the operating system kernel is
2 loaded from a flash memory.

- 1 5. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:
2 freezing a lock mechanism to prevent tampering with security
3 parameters.

- 1 6. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the plurality of drivers include
2 integrated device electronics (IDE) drivers.

- 1 7. A system, comprising:
2 a processor;
3 a hard drive coupled to the processor;
4 an operating system to execute on the processor;

5 a basic input-output system (BIOS) to execute on the processor;
6 a password stored in the basic input-output system (BIOS) to unlock the
7 hard drive; and
8 a driver to execute from the operating system on the processor and to call
9 the basic input-output system (BIOS) to retrieve the password.

1 8. The system as recited in claim 7, further comprising:
2 a chassis intrusion mechanism to alternate between a secure mode and a
3 maintenance mode;
4 wherein the hard drive remains password protected in both the secure
5 mode and the maintenance mode.

1 9. The system as recited in claim 7, wherein the password is a serial
2 number.

1 10. The system as recited in claim 7, wherein the password is encrypted.

1 11. A machine-accessible medium having associated content capable of
2 directing the machine to perform a method, the method comprising:
3 receiving, by a basic input-output system (BIOS), a hard drive password
4 request from an operating system;
5 determining, by the basic input-output system (BIOS), if a system is in a
6 maintenance mode;
7 retrieving, by the basic input-output system (BIOS), a password, when
8 the system is not in a maintenance mode;
9 encrypting, by the basic input-output system (BIOS), the password; and
10 passing, by the basic input-output system (BIOS), the encrypted
11 password to the operating system.

1 12. The machine-accessible medium as recited in claim 11, further

2 comprising:
3 requesting, by an integrated device electronics (IDE) driver, the
4 password;
5 receiving, by the integrated device electronics (IDE) driver, the encrypted
6 password;
7 wherein the integrated device electronics (IDE) driver is part of the
8 operating system.

1 13. The machine-accessible medium as recited in claim 11, wherein the
2 password is a system serial number.

1 14. A method, comprising:
2 determining, by an operating system, that a hard drive is locked;
3 receiving, by the operating system, a password from a basic input-output
4 system (BIOS); and
5 unlocking, by the operating system, the hard drive using the password.

1 15. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising:
2 determining, by the operating system, if the password is valid;
3 wherein unlocking, by the operating system, the hard drive is performed
4 only if the password is valid.

1 16. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising:
2 freezing, by the operating system, a lock mechanism for the hard drive.

1 17. A method, comprising:
2 executing a basic input-output system (BIOS);
3 loading an operating system kernel;
4 executing the operating system kernel;
5 loading at least one integrated device electronics (IDE) driver;
6 querying a hard drive to determine if the hard drive is locked;

7 if the hard drive is locked, querying the basic input-output system (BIOS)
8 for a password;
9 returning the password from the basic input-output system (BIOS) to the
10 at least one integrated device electronics (IDE) driver; and
11 unlocking the hard drive.

1 18. The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising:
2 accessing the basic input-output system (BIOS) from the operating
3 system kernel through a system interrupt.

1 19. The method as recited in claim 18, further comprising:
2 initializing the hard drive, after unlocking the hard drive.

1 20. The method as recited in claim 18, wherein the computer system loads
2 the operating system kernel in approximately three seconds.